

Environmental Pact Midpoint Commemoration in Munich

Speech by Bavarian Prime Minister Dr. Edmund Stoiber
10 April 2003

Today is a good day for the environment. We are at the halfway point of the Bavarian Environmental Pact and I am happy to be here with you today to celebrate this joyful event.

Last week, Environmental Minister Schnappauf made it clear in his Bavarian State-of-the-Environment address that, *Environmental protection is not just a fair weather topic for times of budget surpluses and low unemployment.*

Of course, Germany has **huge structural deficit problems**, which we must solve if our country is ever to get on its feet again. And naturally, the **war in Iraq** concerns us.

But with all the current internal and external political problems that need to be overcome, we must never forget: We all have a **vast responsibility to protect and preserve nature and our environment**. Our creator intended mankind to not only make use of and shape our environment, but also to care for and protect it. Our children and grandchildren have a right to inherit a healthy and intact environment.

Therefore I have a very important political mission to bring together economic development and societal well being with lasting protection of our environment.

And you obviously share this mission. The **Bavarian Environmental Pact** is starting its second half and with the presence of so many important representatives of the Bavarian economy, it is clear: We all share that responsibility.

Eight years ago when we signed the **first Environmental Pact**, both partners, the State of Bavaria and the Business Community, treaded on new ground.

However, the success of the Environmental Pact – that you have so highly acclaimed today – and the broad participation by all sizes and shapes of the Bavarian business community has made **cooperative environmental protection** a **model** well beyond the border of Bavaria.

The core principle of **cooperative environmental protection** is packaging the strengths and resources of both State and Business to collectively forge progress in long term sustainable development. The basis for this is **volunteerism, self-responsibility, and cooperation**.

The Federal government relies on mandated environmental rules and regulations. The outcome is more bureaucracy and patronizing of citizens, businesses, and municipalities.

We are taking a different path than the federal government. Increasingly it will be the role of the States to set boundaries to encourage self-responsibility and pro-active environmental initiatives

by the business community. This does not mean abandonment of necessary, effective and reasonable laws, but rather a meaningful broadening of them.

Sustainable development means to preserve limited natural resources. A key to this lies within businesses themselves. This means that businesses must capitalize on savings of raw materials and energy to the greatest extent possible. This is advantageous for the bottom line as well as for the environment.

Going by the numbers: Savings of roughly 2 – 5 % of total operating costs can be achieved with **targeted environmental management**. In Germany, this would result in cost reductions of € 20 – 50 billion (Euros). Correspondingly, this would translate to € 3 – 8 billion in Bavaria that could be invested in other ventures.

Environmental protection and economic competitiveness are not opposing terms. This has already been proven by the widespread voluntary reduction in CO² emissions in several economic sectors. These kinds of pledges could certainly become a part of an **Environmental Pact for all of Germany**.

I believe in cooperative environmental protection as it is anchored in the Environmental Pact. That is why I recommended an **Environmental Pact for Germany** during the 2002 Federal Bundestag campaign. A federally endorsed Environmental Pact would greatly enhance environmental politics in Germany.

The joint goal of State and Business of an Environmental Pact for Germany should also be to further advance the high standard of German environmental protection at an **international level**.

I am thinking for example of the new East European members of the European Union that certainly have a lot of “catching up” to do in the environmental arena.

The same is true for China. Last week I visited China with a large business delegation. China is in the midst of changing from primarily agricultural to an industry and service based economy. There will be an ever-increasing need to balance this dynamic growth with the protection and preservation of natural resources of China.

This is a challenge to which China must rise. Environmental protection is becoming an extremely important topic in China. Environmental protection and awareness will be a cornerstone of the 2008 Olympic games in Beijing. In fact, it will be one of the leading concepts of the games.

When it comes to environmental protection we too, are expected to share and assist China with our knowledge and experience. We can certainly be proud of and rely on our expertise in development of environmental technologies in Germany and especially in Bavaria.

That is why, under the auspices of “*Advance Future Bavaria,*” we are transforming the **Schwaben Region** of Bavaria into an internationally renowned center for environmental technologies.

We are clustering appropriate business and industrial interests and fostering environmental “know-how,” at the *Augsburg-Schwaben Environmental Competency Center*.

At the *Bavarian Institute for Applied Environmental Research and Technology* in Augsburg, we are supporting research with practical applications and solutions for small to medium sized businesses.

And, we are providing entrepreneurs with new ideas and inventions the opportunity to market their products at the *Environmental Technology Innovations Center* in Augsburg.

Ladies and Gentlemen, when it comes to protecting and preserving our environment, **we Bavarians don't have to hide from anyone.**

For example, renewable energy is playing an ever-increasing role in Bavaria. The percentage of renewable energy used for primary energy production is already close to 11%. That is three times as high as the German average! We are the front-runner in renewable energy use in Germany.

We want to continue on this path. **The continued expansion of renewable energy is one of the highest priorities under the State's Energy Policy.**

In the last ten years alone, we have provided over €850 million for incentives and interest-free loans for developing increased energy efficiencies, renewable energy, and new energy technologies.

This kind of policy bears fruit. **The yearly CO² emissions in Bavaria is 7 tons per capita, the lowest of all German States** and is one third below the Federal average.

Of course we must be clear on this: In the opinion of the Bavarian Government, an Energy Policy whose goal is to be reliable, economic, and environmental friendly and protective can only be achieved with an reasonable **mix of energies.**

This energy mix contains fossil energy. It includes renewables. And it also includes nuclear energy.

This **broad spectrum of energy options** is the foundation of the Bavarian Energy Policy and provides safe, cost effective and efficient energy for all areas of the state. This broad energy policy also results in Bavaria having an **attractive business climate.**

Ladies and Gentlemen, cooperative environmental protection and sustainable development are the icons of Bavarian Environmental Policy. The Environmental Pact plays a leading role in this regard.

I am a believer in the Environmental Pact. I am also very optimistic that State government and businesses will continue forging ahead on this path well beyond 2005.

But it's true that the only thing for certain is change. Therefore we will continue to work together on instrumentation of the Environmental Pact. Whether it is developing new ideas – for example, I'm thinking about reducing land consumption, or continued strengthening of self-responsibility, or strengthening self-audits or whether to improve or streamline existing cooperative instruments. . The main thing is the continued willingness of the State and business community to maintain and expand the foundation of trust and partnership.

With that, I give a heartfelt thanks to all of you participating in the Environmental Pact.

Our goal is ecological quality of life for generations and handling our natural resources so that future generations have the same opportunities we have now.

Let us working together to achieve our goal.

*Translated by Annette Weissbach
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